

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 15, 2021

The Honorable Denis R. McDonough
Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We write to make you aware of a legal prohibition against the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) providing abortion and to encourage you to embrace life-affirming policies and practices for our nation's veterans in your work as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

As you know, 38 Code of Federal Regulations §17.38(c)(1) prohibits VA from offering abortion or abortion counseling to veteran patients. During a recent hearing before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, you stated that you do not plan to pursue public rulemaking to amend that regulation and add abortion or abortion counseling to VA's medical benefits package. We applaud that assurance. It is undoubtedly the right decision for veterans and their unborn children. However, we wanted to make you aware that, in addition to that regulatory prohibition, VA is also prohibited from providing abortion in law. Section 106 of the Veterans Health Care Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-585) authorized VA to provide certain health care services to women veterans but specifically prohibited VA from providing abortions. That prohibition remains law.

It is our belief – and the law maintains – that VA must never use taxpayer dollars to provide abortions or abortion counseling to veterans. To do so would be contrary to the God-given right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness that generations of veterans fought to defend. We trust that you agree and that you will continue to protect and preserve the sanctity of life in VA.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your commitment to the men and women who have served.

Sincerely,


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Member of Congress


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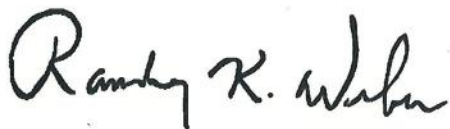
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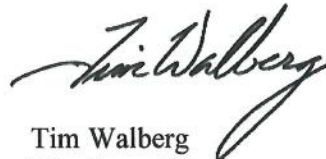
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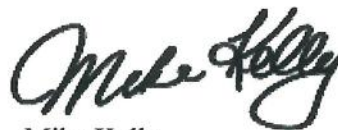
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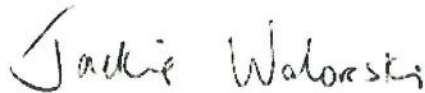
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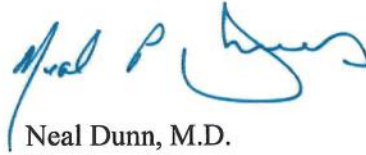
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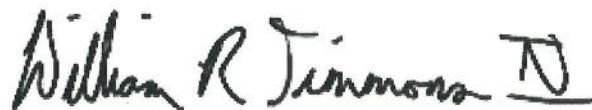
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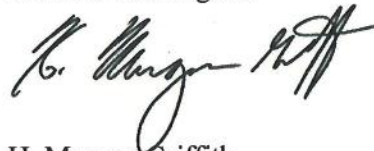
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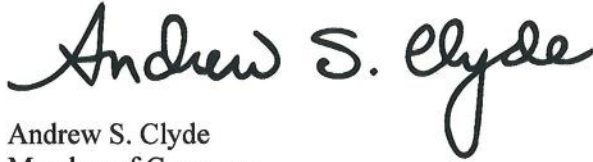
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